



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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July 1, 2008

ADOPTED
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

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JUL 01 2008

Dear Supervisors:

Sachi A. Hamai
SACHI A. HAMAI
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

RECOMMENDATION REGARDING ALLOCATION OF REWARD FUNDS
IN THE MATTER OF BABY ROSE THE NEWBORN WHO'S BODY WAS FOUND
ALONG RAILROAD TRACKS IN ALHAMBRA
(ALL DISTRICTS)
(3-VOTE)

SUBJECT

Approval of this recommendation will authorize the Executive Officer of the Board to distribute reward funds to the individuals who provided information to the Alhambra Police Department that led to the conviction of Tonya Shafer, the person responsible for the death of a newborn baby girl, known as Baby Rose, whose body was found on March 11, 2006, along the railroad tracks in the City of Alhambra.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

Approve the recommendation of the Reward Committee to distribute reward funds in amount of \$5,000 to Claimant No. 1 and \$5,000 to Claimant No. 2 for a total amount of \$10,000, to be paid from the Board's discretionary funds, to the individuals who provided information to law enforcement that led to the conviction of Tonya Shafer, the person responsible for the death of a newborn baby girl whose body was found on March 11, 2006, along the railroad tracks in the City of Alhambra.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

On May 16, 2006, your Board offered a \$10,000 reward on motion of Supervisor Antonovich, relating to the death of a newborn baby girl, know as Baby Rose, whose body was found on March 11, 2006, along the railroad tracks in the City of Alhambra. The filing period to submit a claim to the Executive Office for the reward money expired on October 13, 2006.

On December 5, 2006, your Board reestablished the reward offered for the purpose of allowing the individual to file a claim who offered information to the Alhambra Police Department that lead to the arrest of and eventual conviction of Tonya Shafer, the person responsible for the death of Baby Rose. On December 20, 2006, the Executive Office of the Board received a claim from the individuals who wish to remain anonymous (Claimants), for the \$10,000 reward.

In accordance with provisions of the County Code, Title 4 – Revenue and Finance relating to rewards, your Board must now consider the claim and make a final determination for distribution of the reward funds.

A panel of individuals representing the Sheriff, Chief Executive Officer, County Counsel and the Executive Officer of the Board met and reviewed the claim filed for the reward funds. The panel is recommending that the reward funds in total amount of \$10,000 be awarded as follows: \$5,000 to Claimant No. 1 and \$5,000 to Claimant No. 2.

The chronological events in this case are as follows:

- On March 11, 2006 a newborn baby girl was found dead along the railroad tracks in the City of Alhambra. The baby was found wrapped in plastic grocery bags.
- On May 16, 2006 the Board, on motion of Supervisor Antonovich, approved the establishment of a \$10,000 reward to encourage citizens to come forward and assist law enforcement in the investigation of the case.
- Shortly after the discovery of the baby more than 50 tips were received by the Alhambra Police Department. During the investigation of the tips received, Detectives interviewed a tipster who provided information on behalf of the claimants who wished to remain anonymous. During their investigation of the information provided, the Detectives then contacted the Claimants and requested interviews for further aid in their investigation, to which both complied.

- Armed with the information provided by the Claimants and DNA test results, the Alhambra Police Department was able to positively identify and arrest 41-year-old Tonya Shafer on November 29, 2006. Two charges were filed against Tonya Shafer by the District Attorney [Penal Code Section Nos. 187(a) and 273(a) and (b)].
- Following the arrest of Tonya Shafer, the Claimants were instructed to file a claim with the Executive Office of the Board. However, the claim filing period expired on October 13, 2006. Therefore, on December 5, 2006, the Board, on motion of Supervisor Antonovich, approved the reestablishment of the \$10,000 reward for the purpose of allowing the individuals to file a claim who offered information to the Alhambra Police Department that led to the arrest of Tonya Shafer, the person responsible for the death of Baby Rose.
- On December 20, 2006, a claim was filed with the Executive Office of the Board on behalf of both Claimants.
- On April 7, 2008, Tonya Shafer was convicted on two charges [Penal Code Section Nos. 187(a) and 273(a)]; and sentenced on April 30, 2008 to a term of 25 years-to-life.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

Approval of the above recommendation supports the County Strategic Goal of Service Excellence. Publication in local newspapers and posting of reward notices on the County website may encourage persons to provide information to law enforcement, which could lead to the arrest and/or conviction of the individuals who commit crimes, thereby improving the quality of life to residents of Los Angeles County by removing such individuals from the community.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The Board of Supervisors established a \$10,000 reward fund. Pursuant to provisions in the County Code, the reward is to be paid from the Board of Supervisors' discretionary funds in equal shares of \$2,000 from each member's account.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

In 1993, the Board of Supervisors adopted an amendment to the County Code establishing procedures for offering cash rewards for information leading to the apprehension and/or conviction of persons guilty of criminal acts. Your Board, from time to time has offered such rewards to encourage citizens to come forward and assist law enforcement with their investigations.

The action recommended is in compliance with the County Code, Title 4 - Revenue and Finance relating to rewards; and specifically Section 4.50.010B which states, "conviction of the person or persons responsible for the crime shall be required for payment of a reward unless the Board of Supervisors makes a finding of impossibility of conviction due to the death or incapacity of such person or persons."

The Notice of Reward Offered was posted on the Board of Supervisors' web site. In addition, copies were provided to the Alhambra Police Department.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

There is no impact on current County services.

Respectfully submitted,



SACHI A. HAMAI
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

R:\Reward Letters\Reward letter regarding Baby Rose.doc

c: Sheriff
Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Acting Auditor-Controller